

THE Romance of Elaine

A Detective Novel and a Motion Picture Drama

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Miss Pearl White Elaine Dodge
Mr. Lionel Barrymore Marcius Del Mar

WRITTEN BY ARTHUR B. REEVE

The Well-Known Novelist and the Creator of the "Craig Kennedy" Stories

Dramatized Into a Photo-Play by Chas. W. Goddard, Author of "The Perils of Pauline," "The Exploits of Elaine."

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SYNOPSIS
After the finding of Wu Fang's body and Kennedy's submarine, a marine appears the following morning on the bay. A man plunges overboard from it and swims ashore. It is the entrance of Marcius Del Mar into America. At the Dodge home one of Wu Fang's men is trying to obtain information of Kennedy and the lost torpedo. His plan is blocked by Del Mar's arrival, who also succeeds in winning Elaine's confidence. Later she is warned by a little old man to be careful. Del Mar's mission at the Dodge house was to locate and recover the torpedo. He would have been successful had it not been for Elaine's dog, Rusty, who dug it from the flower bed, while Del Mar and Elaine were talking only a few feet away. Rusty carried the torpedo to the attic. The little old man meets Del Mar at the Dodge house. They drag guns together, escape from a plumed shell, and Del Mar's revolver overcomes Del Mar and Elaine, and the old man of mystery escapes. Shortly after the affair Elaine gives a masquerade ball. Del Mar attends. Neither he nor his dominos give any clue to the torpedo. Del Mar warns Elaine and Jansone of Del Mar's purpose, and his plans are upset. Elaine's dog, Rusty, is sent to Elaine's country home as a maid. She finds the torpedo in the attic, places it in a trunk, which with others is sent to Elaine's country home. A holdup on the train takes place. Del Mar carries the train away only to find on opening it that they have the wrong one.

Wreck of the Torpedo

CHAPTER III
Del Mar had evidently, by this time, come to the conclusion that Elaine was the storm center of the peculiar train of events that followed the disappearance of Kennedy and his wireless torpedo. At any rate, as soon as he learned that Elaine was going to her country home for the summer, he took a bungalow some distance from Dodge Hall. In fact, it was more than a bungalow, for it was a pretentious place surrounded by a wide lawn and beautiful shade trees.

There, on the day that Elaine decided to motor in from the city, Del Mar arrived with his valet. Evidently he lost no time in getting to work on his own affairs, whatever they might be. Inside his study, which was the largest room in the house, a combination of both library and laboratory, he gave an order to two of his valets, then immediately set down to his desk. He opened a drawer and took out a long hollow cylinder, closed at each end by air-tight caps, on one of which was a book.

Quickly he wrote a note and read it over. "Install submarine bell in place of these dynamites. Am having harbor and bridges mined as per instructions from government D."

He unscrewed the cap at one end of the tube, inserted the note and closed it. Then he pushed a button on his desk. A panel in the wall opened and one of the men who had played policeman once for him stepped out and saluted. "Here's a message to send below," said Del Mar briefly.

The man bowed and went back through the panel, closing it. Del Mar cleaned up his desk and then went out to look his new quarters over, to see whether everything had been prepared according to his instructions. From the concealed entrance to a cave on a hillside, Del Mar's man who had gone through the panel in the bungalow appeared a few minutes later and hurried down to the shore. It was a rocky coast with stretches of cliffs and sand and then a ravine and a bit of sandy beach. Gingerly he climbed down the rocks to the water.

He took from his pocket the metal tube which Del Mar had given him and led to the hook on one end attached a weight of lead. A moment he looked about cautiously. Then he threw the tube into the water and it sank quickly. He did not wait, but hurried back into the cave entrance.

Elaine, Aunt Josephine and I motored down to Dodge Hall from the city. Elaine's country home was on a fine estate near the Long Island Sound and after the long run we were glad to pull up before the big house and get out of the car. As we approached the door I happened to look down the road.

"Thank you," said Elaine, endeavoring to pay the farmer.

"No, no, Miss," he demurred as he clucked to his horses.

We waved to the old fellow. As he started to drive away, he reached down into the basket and drew out some yellow harvest apples. One at a time he tossed them to us as he lumbered off.

"Truly rural," remarked a voice behind us.

It was Del Mar, all topped up and carrying a magazine in his hand.

We chatted a moment, then Elaine started to go into the house with Aunt Josephine. With Del Mar I followed.

She went Elaine look a bit of the apple. To her surprise it separated neatly into two hollow halves. She looked inside. There was a note. Carefully she unfolded it and read. Like the others, it was not written, but printed in pencil.

"Be careful to unpack all your trunks yourself. Destroy this note. A Friend."

What did these mysterious warnings mean, she asked herself in amazement. Somehow so far they had worked out all right. She tore up the note and threw the pieces away.

Del Mar and I stopped for a moment to talk. I did not notice that he was not listening to me, but was surreptitiously watching Elaine.

Elaine went into the house and we followed. Del Mar, however, dropped just a bit behind and, as he came to the place where Elaine had thrown the pieces of paper, dropped his magazine. He stooped to pick it up and gathered the pieces, then rejoined us.

"I hope you'll excuse me," said Elaine brightly. "We've just arrived and I haven't a thing unpacked."

Del Mar bowed and Elaine left us. Aunt Josephine followed shortly. Del Mar and I sat down at a table. As he talked he placed the magazine in his lap beneath the table, on his knees. I could not see, but he was in reality secretly putting together the torn note which the farmer had thrown to Elaine.

Finally he managed to fit all the pieces. A glance down was enough. But his face betrayed nothing. Still under the table, he swept the pieces into his pocket and

"I'll drop in when you are more settled," he exhorted himself, strolling leisurely out again.

Up in the bedroom Elaine's maid, Marie, had been unpacking.

"Well, what do you know about that?" she exclaimed as Jennings and Patrick came dragging in the banged up trunk.

"Here's a queer," remarked Jennings, detailing the little he had seen, while Patrick left.

The entrance of Elaine put an end to the interesting gossip and Marie started to open the trunk.

"No, Marie," said Elaine. "I'll unpack them myself. You can put the things away later. You and Jennings may go."

Quickly she took the things out of the battered trunk. Then she started on the other trunk which was like it but not marked. She threw out a couple of garments, then paused, staid.

There was the lost torpedo—where Barthold had stuck it in her haste! Elaine picked it up and looked at it in wonder as it recalled all those last days before Kennedy was lost. For the moment she did not know quite what to make of it. What should she do?

Finally she decided to look it up in the bureau drawer and tell me. Not only did she look the drawer, but, as she left her room, she took the key of the door from the lock inside and looked it outside.

Del Mar did not go far from the house, however. He scarcely reached the edge of the grounds where he was sure he was not observed when he placed his fingers to his lips and whistled. An instant later two of his men appeared from behind a hedge.

"You must get into her room," he ordered. "That torpedo is in her luggage somewhere, after all."

rose and pulled himself to the roof, going as he had come.

It did not take him long to unpack the few things I had brought and I was soon back again in the living room, where Aunt Josephine joined me in a few minutes.

Just as Elaine came hurriedly down the stairway and started toward me, Del Mar entered from the porch. She stopped. Del Mar watched her closely. Had she found anything? He was sure of it.

Her hesitation was only for a moment, however. "Walter," she said, "may I speak to you a moment? Excuse us, please?"

Aunt Josephine went out toward the back of the house to see how the servants were getting on, while I followed Elaine upstairs. Del Mar with a bow started himself and opened his magazine. No sooner had we gone, however, than he laid it down and cautiously followed us.

Elaine was evidently very much excited as she entered her dainty little room and closed the door. "Walter," she cried, "I've found the torpedo!"

We looked about at the general disorder. "Why," she exclaimed nervously, "someone has been here—and I locked the door, too."

She almost ran over to her bureau drawer. It had been jimmied open in the few minutes while she was downstairs. The torpedo was gone. We looked at each other, aghast.

Behind us, however, we did not see the keen and watchful eyes of Del Mar, opening the door and peering in. As he saw us, he closed the door softly, went downstairs and out of the house.

Perhaps half a mile down the road the farmer abandoned his hay rack and now, followed by his peculiar dog, walked back. He stopped at a point in the road where he could see the Dodge house in the distance, sat on the rail fence and lighted a blackened corn-cob pipe.

There he sat for some time, apparently engrossed in his own thoughts about the weather, the dog lying at his feet. Now and then he looked fixedly toward Dodge Hall.

Suddenly his riveted attention seemed to be riveted on the house. He drew a field glass from his pocket and leveled it. Sure enough, there was a man coming out of a window, pulling himself up to the roof by a rope and going across the roof tree. He lowered the glasses quickly and climbed off the fence with a hitherto unwanted energy.

"Come, Searchlight," he called to the dog, as together they moved off quickly in the direction he had been looking.

Del Mar's men were coming through the hedge that surrounded the Dodge estate just as the farmer and his dog stepped out in front of them from behind a thicket.

"Just a minute," he called, "I want to speak to you."

He enforced his words with a vicious looking gun. It was two to one and they closed with him. Before he could shoot, they had knocked the gun out of his hand. Then they tried to break away and run.

But the farmer seized one of them and held him. Meanwhile the dog developed traits all his own. He ran in and out between the legs of the other man until he threw him. There he stood, over him. The man attempted to rise. Again the dog threw him and kept him down. He was a trained Belgian sheep hound, a splendid police dog.

"Confound the brute," growled the man, reaching for his gun.

As he drew it the dog seized his wrist and with a cry the man dropped the gun. That, too, was part of the dog's training.

While the farmer and the other man struggled on the ground, the torpedo worked its way half from the man's pocket. The farmer seized it. The man fell back limp and the farmer, with the torpedo in one hand, grasped at the gun on the ground and stratagued up.

He had no sooner risen than the man was at him again. His unconsciousness had been merely feigned. The struggle was renewed.

At that point the hedge down the road parted and Del Mar stepped out. A glance was enough to tell him what was going on. He drew his gun and ran swiftly toward the combatants.

As Del Mar approached, his man succeeded in knocking the torpedo from the farmer's hand. There it lay, several feet away. There seemed to be no chance for either man to get it.

Quickly the farmer bent his wrist, aiming the gun deliberately at the precious torpedo. As fast as he could he pulled the trigger. Five of the six shots penetrated the little model.

So surprised was his antagonist that the farmer was able to knock him out with the butt of his gun. He broke away and fled, whistling on a police whistle for the dog just as Del Mar ran up. A couple of shots from Del Mar flew wild as the farmer and his dog disappeared.

Elaine ordered her little runabout and a few moments later we climbed into it and Elaine shot the car away.

As we rode along, the country seemed so quiet that no one would ever have suspected that foreign agents lurked all about. But it was just under such a cover that the nefarious bridge and harbor mining work ordered by Del Mar's superiors was going ahead quietly.

As our car climbed a hill on the other side of which, in the valley, was a bridge, we could not see one of Del Mar's men in hiding at the top. He saw us, however, and immediately wigwagged with his handkerchief to several others down at the bridge where they were attaching a pair of wires to the planking.

"Someone coming," muttered one who was evidently a lookout.

The men stopped work immediately and hid in the brush. Our car passed over the bridge and we saw nothing wrong. But no sooner had we gone than the men crept out and resumed work which had progressed to the point where they were ready to carry the wires of an electric connection through the grass, concealing them as they went.

In the study of his bungalow, all the time, Del Mar was striding angrily up and down, while his men waited in silence.

Finally he paused and turned to one of them. "See that the coast is clear and keep clear," he ordered. "I want to go down."

The man saluted and went out through the panel. A moment later Del Mar gave



Something bobbed up in the water. It was a cylinder containing a note.

orders to the other man who also saluted and left the house by the front door, just as our car pulled up.

Del Mar, the moment the man was gone, put on his hat and moved toward the panel in the wall. He was about to enter when he heard someone coming down the hall to the study and stepped back, closing the panel. It was the butler announcing us.

We had entered Del Mar's bungalow and now were conducted to his library. There Elaine told him the whole story, much to his apparent surprise, for Del Mar was a wonderful actor.

"You see," he said as she finished telling of the finding and the losing of the torpedo, "just what I feared would happen has happened. Doubtless the foreign agents have the deadly weapon now. However, I'll not quit. Perhaps we may run them down yet."

He reassured us and we thanked him as we said goodbye. Outside, Elaine and I got into the car again and a moment later spun off, making a little detour first through the country before hitting the shore road back again to Dodge Hall.

On the rocky shore of the oromontory, several men were engaged in sinking a peculiar heavy disk which they submerged about ten or twelve feet. It seemed to be held by a cable and to it wires were attached, apparently so that when a key was pressed, a circuit was closed.

It was an "oscillator," a new system for the employment of sound for submarine signaling, using water instead of air as a medium to transmit sound waves. It was composed of a ring magnet, a copper tube lying in an air gap in a magnetic field and a stationary central armature. The tube was attached to a steel diaphragm. Really, it was a submarine bell which could be used for telegraphing or telephoning both ways through the water.

The men finished executing the directions of Del Mar and left, carefully concealing the land connections and key of the bell, while we were still at Del Mar's.

We had no sooner left, however, than one of the men who had been engaged in installing the submarine bell entered the library.

"Well," demanded Del Mar. "The bell is installed, sir," he said. "It will be working soon."

"Good," nodded Del Mar. He went to a drawer and from it took a peculiar looking helmet, to which was attached a sort of harness fitting over the shoulders and carrying a tank of oxygen. The tank was a most weird contrivance, with what looked like a huge glass eye in front. It was in reality a submarine life-saving apparatus.

Del Mar put it on, all except the helmet, which he carried with him, and then, with his assistant, went out through the panel in the wall. Through the underground passage the two groped their way, lit by an electric torch, until at last they came to the entrance hidden in the underbrush, near the shore.

Del Mar went over to the concealed station from which the submarine bell was sounded and pressed the key as a signal. Then he adjusted the submarine helmet to his head and deliberately waded out into the water, farther and farther, up to his head, then deeper still.

As he disappeared into the water his emissary turned and went back toward the short road.

below. She's coming over the hill now in a car. We've got to blow up the bridge as she crosses."

The men were hurrying now toward the bridge which they had mined. Not a moment was to be lost, for already they could see us coming over the crest of the hill.

In a few seconds they reached the hidden plunger firing box which had been arranged to explode the charge under the bridge. There they crouched in the moment our car touched the planking.

One of the men crept out a little nearer the road. "They're coming!" he called back, dropping down again. "Get ready!"

Del Mar's emissaries had not reckoned, however, that anyone else might be about to whom the heliograph was an open book.

But, further over on the hill, hiding among the trees, the old farmer and his dog were sitting quietly. The old man was sweeping the sound with his glasses, as if he expected to see something any moment.

To his surprise, however, he caught a flash of the heliograph from the land. Quickly he turned and jotted down the signals. As he did so, he seemed greatly excited, for the message from below.

"Dodge girl has message from below. Coming in car. Blow first bridge she crosses."

Quickly he turned his glasses down the road. There he could see our car approaching the hill toward the bridge. Then he broke into a run, the dog scouting ahead.

We were going along the road nicely now, coasting down the hill. As we approached the bridge, Elaine slowed up a bit, to cross, for the planking was loose.

Just then the farmer, who had been running down the hill, saw us. "Stop!" he shouted.

But we did not hear. He ran after us, but the chase was hopeless. He stopped, in despair.

With a gesture of vexation he took a step or two mechanically off the road. Elaine and I were coming fast to the bridge now.

In their hiding place, Del Mar's men were watching breathlessly. The leader was just about to press the plunger when all of a sudden a branch in the thicket beside him cracked. There stood the farmer and his dog!

Instantly the farmer seemed to take in the situation. With a cry he threw himself at the man who had the plunger. Another man leaped at the farmer. The dog settled him. The others piled in and a terrific struggle followed. It was all so rapid that, to all, seconds seemed like hours.

We were just starting to cross the bridge. One of the men broke away and

crawled toward the plunger box. Our car was now in the middle of the bridge.

Over and over rolled the men, the dog doing his best to help his master. The man who had broken away reached toward the plunger.

With a shout he pushed it down. Our car had just cleared the bridge when we were startled by a terrific roar behind us. It was as though a thousand tires had blown out at once. Elaine shut off the engine automatically and we looked back.

The whole bridge had been blown up. A second before we had been in the middle of it.

As the explosion came, the men who had been struggling in the thicket paused, startled, and stared out. At that instant the old farmer saw his chance. It was all over and he bolted, calling the dog.

Along the road to the bridge he ran, two of the men after him. "Come back," growled the leader. "Let him go. Do you want us all to get caught?"

As the farmer ran up to the bridge he saw it in ruins. But down the road he could see Elaine and myself sitting in the car staring back at the peril which we had so narrowly escaped. His face lighted up in as great joy as a few moments before it had shined despair.

"What can that have been?" asked Elaine, starting to get out of the car. "What caused it?"

"I don't know," I returned, taking her arm firmly, "but enough has happened today. If it was intended for us we'd better not stop. Someone might take a shot at us. Come. We have the car. We can get out before anyone does anything more. Let's do it. Things are going on about us of which we know nothing. The safest thing is to get away."

Elaine looked at the bridge in ruins and shuddered. It was the closest we could have been to death and have escaped. Then she turned to the wheel quickly and the little car fairly jumped ahead.

"Oh, if Craig were only here," she murmured. "He would know what to do."

As we disappeared over the crest of the next hill, safe, the old farmer and his dog looked hard at us.

The silence after the explosion was ominous. He glanced about. No one was pursuing him. That seemed ominous, too. But if they did pursue he was prepared to elude them. They must never recognize the old farmer.

As he turned he deliberately pulled off his beard, then plunged again into the woods and was lost.

(To be continued.)

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